



Artist Residency: Drawing Diversity (2025-2027)

Calls for Applications

Summary

The University of Reading Art Collection are seeking to appoint an **Artist in Residence** to respond to the University's remarkable but under-utilised drawings collection and run workshops with local secondary school pupils at [Maiden Erlegh School, Reading](#).

Over the course of three academic years, the chosen artist will use the theme of 'Drawing Diversity' as a jumping off point to explore stories that may be missing from the University's Western drawings collection. This might include drawing practices that engage with: cultures of the global majority, disabled individuals, people of colour, and /or people of diverse gender identities, including nonbinary identities. Possible questions to consider might include:

- Whose bodies are represented?
- Whose artistic practices are centred?
- Which narratives are absent?
- Which voices are not heard?
- Who is visible and who remains unseen?

Between 2026-2027, a series of secondary school workshops led by the chosen artist will introduce pupils to the University's drawings collection, offering them the opportunity to engage directly with original artworks. Through these sessions, students will explore art history while developing their observational, communication, creative, and critical thinking skills.

In the final year of the residency (2027), the selected artist will collaborate with the students to curate an exhibition of student work—created in response to our collection—at Maiden Erlegh School's exhibition space. A key element of the programme will also be to broaden pupils' understanding of creative career pathways, including roles such as artists, curators, and museum professionals. Finally, the artist will also produce a Learning Resource or workshop plan as part of the legacy of this project.

This Artist Residency has been made possible by the [GEM Art Scholars Enriching Lives Grant Programme](#), 2025-2027. This is the second of our 'Drawing Diversity' Artist Residencies. More information about our previous residency can be found [here](#).

We will support the artist by:

1. Facilitating access to the University's drawings collection.
2. Supporting the artist in building a connection with the selected secondary school.
3. Promoting the residency, associated workshop and exhibition through blogs and social media channels.
4. Assisting with the coordination of the final exhibition at Maiden Erlegh.

The artist will need to take responsibility for the overall project management of the project, including workshops, which should be accounted for in the budget.

Timescale:

- **December 2025** - Research into the University drawings collection should begin and preliminary visit to the school to meet with school tutors.
- **Tuesday 13 January 2026** – First introductory workshop at Maiden Erlegh.
- **2026-2027:** Additional sessions at Maiden Erlegh.
Please note the artist and the school will be given the flexibility to determine the number of sessions they wish to hold during 2026/2027 academic years.
- **2027 (dates tbc)** – Collaborative exhibition to take place at Maiden Erlegh School showcasing the Residency and the artworks produced by the students.

Budget:

The fee for the residency is **£4,500**, paid in **three instalments** across 2025-2027. (Please note that due to the nature of our funding, this cannot be paid in one instalment.)

This is inclusive of:

- At least 2 days research in the University of Reading Drawings Collection over the course of the Residency.
- At least 12 dedicated workshops with secondary school students in Reading across the residency period.
- A Learning Resource produced as a result of the Residency that can be used in-person / hosted on our website, for future workshops.
- Technical assistance and other production costs (incl. VAT where applicable and any additional insurance requirements).
- Travel and accommodation expenses if not already based in Reading.
- Project management (including financial management).

Selection Criteria:

We are looking for an artist who:

- Has proven experience delivering workshops with school groups and a strong track record in planning and delivering public engagement activities.
- Engages in a practice that explores themes of diversity and representation.
- Is available to undertake the residency during the specified period.
- Demonstrates excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

We welcome applications from artists at any stage of their professional career. However, the successful applicant must:

- Be self-employed and able to provide a Unique Taxpayer Reference (UTR) and National Insurance number.
- Hold valid Professional Indemnity and Public Liability insurance for the duration of the residency.

How to apply:

Selection of the successful artist will be based on the strength of the artist's work, written application, and interview. Your application should include:

1. Your **name and contact details** (phone, email, postal address).
2. An **Artist Statement** of up to 250 words, which should include reference to the art form/s that you work in.
3. A **Project Statement** of up to 750 words, highlighting your relevant experience, skills and interests relating to the post and outlining your thinking in relation to this residency. This should include information such as the questions you would hope to address, workshop ideas, and how you would plan to carry out your practice and research process. The statement should refer to the selection criteria.
4. **Examples of previous work**, including images or links to a web portfolio and career highlights.
5. **CV** (maximum 2-sides)
6. The names and contact details of **two referees** who may be contacted after interview.
7. Please state if you need a DBS Check.

Application Submission:

Applications should be clearly titled 'Drawing Diversity: Artist in Residence Application' and should reach us no later than midnight, **Monday 10 November**.

Please email your completed application to artcollection@reading.ac.uk

If you prefer to send any supporting materials by post, please send to the following address (including a paid, self-addressed envelope, so that we can return them to you):

Drawing Diversity: Artist in Residence Project
University Art Collection / Museum of English Rural Life
Redlands Road
Reading
RG1 5EX

We aim to contact shortlisted applicants by **Friday 14 November** to arrange an interview which will take place on the week commencing **24 November**.

Enquiries:

If you have any questions about the residency or application process, please contact

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